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A Closet for Everything

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A broadcast by Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, January 21, 1941, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 29 associate radio stations.

--ooOoo--

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Here we are in Washington. And it's just another Tuesday, after the big Monday we had yesterday, with all the impressive events of Inauguration.

As I came across Pennsylvania Avenue a few minutes ago I noticed how rapidly the city's taking on its workaday look.

The grandstands along the line of march of the parade are being taken down. Very soon the flags and bunting will be rolled up and stored away in safe keeping for the next big occasion.

Well, so much for city housekeeping in your nation's capitol. Now we'll call on Ruth Van Deman for news on home housekeeping-----news that stems from the research program of the Bureau of Home Economics-----all set, Ruth?

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

All set. And very much impressed by what you say, Wallace, about the city fathers and their housekeeping. Do you think they have perfect places to store all the decorations and paraphernalia that went with the parade and handling the crowd yesterday? Think they have the perfect place to keep these things clean and dry, where moth and mildew can't corrupt them?

KADDERLY:

I would assume they havebut.....Would you like to advise on that?

VAN DEMAN:

Mercy no. Anything I know about housekeeping is on a strictly family basis-- No, it's just that I'm very storage-conscious today. Take a look at this new bulletin and see if it doesn't make you feel that way too.

KADDERLY:

"Closets and Storage Spaces." Another new bulletin. The Bureau of Home Economics is certainly turning them out these days.

VAN DEMAN:

Look on the title page, and you'll see the name of one of your Oregon friends. She furnished a lot of the ideas for this bulletin, aided and abetted by Robert Dodge, one of the architects with the Department here in Washington.

KADDERLY:

Just hold it a minute, Ruth, till I locate this title page.

(over)

VAN DEMAN:

Page 1. You don't have to look far. And the name is-----

KADDERLY:

Maud Wilson of Oregon State College. I should say I do know Miss Wilson---very well. And I know the houses she's planned and built in Corvallis and on the Oregon coast.

VAN DEMAN:

Her cottage-by-the-sea. I had the honor of being an overnight guest there once. It's one of the most convenient houses I ever saw--with a place for everything--even to the visiting guest's toothbrush.

KADDERLY:

That's Miss Wilson's philosophy about a house. She believes it should be planned around the comfort and the convenience of the people who live in it and come into it for a visit.

VAN DEMAN:

And she thinks that one way to make a house comfortable and convenient is to follow that old precept "Order is Heaven's first law." That's why she's given so much thought to closets and storage facilities.

KADDERLY:

Well if you don't mind my piling precept on precept-----

VAN DEMAN:

Fine. Go ahead.

KADDERLY:

I'd like to add one that I think goes to the root of planning storage arrangements. My favorite saying on that score is: "Order gives each thing view."

VAN DEMAN:

In other words, when you open a cupboard door, you want the contents in plain sight--so you can reach in and take out what you want without disturbing everything else.

KADDERLY:

It's hard enough to find things even when they're in plain sight.

VAN DEMAN:

From what I've observed of your desk and the files at the office, and your tool chest and work bench at home, you keep your belongings in just that kind of perfect order, giving "each thing view."

KADDERLY:

I don't know about that.

VAN DEMAN:

You're just like all the others who are naturally orderly. They're always modest about it. But most of us have to struggle to keep our possessions in order.

KADDERLY:

Part of that struggle, as we suggested a moment ago, is because houses aren't built right. They don't have proper facilities for storing things.

I see Miss Wilson has plans here in this bulletin for many different kinds of closets and storage rooms.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, every kind from a closet near the front door to park your hat and coat in when you go to call, to a linen closet for the bedding and towels, ---- bathroom cabinets, ---- kitchen cupboards, ---- food storage shelves ---- and so on from cellar to attic.

What makes these plans thoroughly practical and useful is that they're drawn to fit the articles to be stored. For instance with the plans for the clothes closets, there's a table giving the amount of rod space to allow for different kinds of garments-- children's clothes as well as those belonging to grown-ups.

KADDERLY:

Does the table give the height to set the rod from the floor?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, worked out on measurements for average garments of each kind.

Women's long evening dresses naturally call for a high rod. But a youngster needs a low rod that he can reach when he hangs up his clothes. Adjustable rods and hooks make it possible for the closet to grow up along with the child.

KADDERLY:

This is smart planning. And I have a notion that if a youngster has his own place to keep his belongings and gets the idea of putting them there regularly, he'll soon get the habit of being orderly.

VAN DEMAN:

You'll like the plan then for a closet off the living room with shelf space for the children to keep their toys, games, phonograph records, Junior's saxophone -- all those things that clutter up the top of the bookcase or the piano.

KADDERLY:

What about the extra table leaves for the dining table? It's often hard to find a place for them that's easy to get at.

VAN DEMAN:

The living room closet might take them. In these plans it happens the table leaves are put next to the stepladder in the cleaning closet.

Of course in all these plans the idea is simply to suggest general types of closets and storage arrangements. There's no ideal plans that will fit all houses.

KADDERLY:

Certainly not. Every house plan has to studied to see just where closets can be worked in. I'd like to take this bulletin home with me and mull it over on some of these long winter evenings.

VAN DEMAN:

Before you've mulled very long you'll be taking down the hammer and the saw and building a room on the back of the garage for the lawn mower, and your rakes, and spades, and trowels ---

KADDERLY:

A garden tool room. Is there a plan in here for that?

VAN DEMAN:

I knew you'd pick up your ears at that. Certainly, there's a plan for storing garden tools --- the last one, at the back of the book.

KADDERLY:

I might have known Miss Wilson would never overlook what it takes to make a gardener happy.

And, Ruth, I take it the Bureau of Home Economics is happy to send this new bulletin on "Closets and Storage Spaces" to any of our friends of the Farm and Home Hour who want suggestions of this kind.

VAN DEMAN:

Very happy to do that, Wallace, -- with all our home economics bulletins. Which reminds me, the girls in our mail room asked me to explain why some requests may not be filled quite as quickly as everybody might like. Last week the orders piled in on us so fast and furiously that we're almost snowed under. But we're digging out. --- It really gives us a big thrill to handle the requests from city, and town, and country in every State this coast-to-coast network covers.

KADDERLY:

(ad lib offer of "Closets and Storage Spaces.).

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